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Should Juvenile Criminal Be Punished the Same as Adult

On August 13th 2021, one boy murdered his mother with kitchen knife just because he was scolded by his mother. One more year ago, few teenager teens killed youth who was doing delivery to earn his living expenses while they were running away from the police. Even though they committed a terrible crime, without any sign of regret or apologize to a victim, they posted a photo shot of smoking a cigarette with a text of “Ready to have fun with Police”. That they are young is the only reason why they are not afraid of their crime. In Korea, there is a juvenile law that protects juvenile under the age of 14 that they are not old enough to reckon their behavior. Besides the juvenile over 14 whom cause sexual assault, robbery, even a murder is not punished as same as adult but still they have some sort of punishment based on a youth law. Nonetheless under the age of 14 juvenile is not even punished by any kind of punishment and get protection disposal. Social anger toward juvenile criminal is beyond the intent of the juvenile law to protect juvenile. The purpose of this law has been weakening over time as the internet is advanced and teenager is being vicious. Juvenile criminals are responsible for their crime; however they are far less punished or even not punished at all, hence they should be punished the same as adults.

First of all, the quality of the crime of juvenile is being collective and brutal. In the past in which the juvenile law was made at the first time, the purpose of the law was to give a chance to young teenager who accidently made a trivial mistake such as hitting their friends or robbing candies. These days, due to provocative exposure of numerous media, juvenile has far more opportunity to contact with wicked stimulation. They abuse their schoolmates physically, mentally and even sexually with group being protected by a law. World Health Organization announced that many more sustain injuries require hospital treatment for each young person killed (*WHO*, 2020). They added that when it is not fatal, juvenile violence has a serious, often lifelong, impact on a person’s physical, psychological and social functioning. Even if the victim suicide, they are just sent reformatory for a couple month or just took discipline from teachers or police. Furthermore, 13 years old juvenile stole 7 million won from 20 unmanned store over 11days and when he was captured, he rather assert to police that he is under the protect of the juvenile law and insist his freedom (Im, J.H, 2022, 2). Giving a chance to immature juvenile is good intention, but considering the result they make, they should be punished strongly in order to prevent these incidents occurring again.

In addition, juvenile criminals commit a crime again much more often than adult criminals. The rate of the juvenile offenders who were caught committing a crime again was three time higher than the rate of adult criminal recidivism (Mallet, C. A, 2013, 3). This situation would have many reasons, yet weak punishment is the strongest factor. In spite of the fact that the seriousness of the crime is same on both juvenile and adult, juvenile criminals are punished fare less than elder criminals and are protected by juvenile law. Christopher says that there is a tendency for juvenile criminals to justify their crime as they have no punishment for their doing and commit a crime again. Because they are not fully grown mentally, they do not recognize that low punishment is a meaning of opportunity, but interpret it as a righteousness of their behavior. Then, not punishing seriously with strict law will cause them make an another evil crime and give unsuitable precedent to other juvenile. Therefore, juvenile criminal should be punished identical to adult.

As teenager is a pillar who will manage country’s future, they should be protected and encouraged by society. Nevertheless, they should only be protected in the range of maintaining society and when they cross the line, they must be punished as same as adult. Because their crime is growing cruel and dense, blindly defending them will bring about bigger problem to society. There was a blue house petition of one 13 years old girl’s mother appealing resent of perpetrator juvenile who stole her money, raped her and took a video of it and got no punishment. Furthermore, statistics that recidivism rate of teenager is three times higher than that of adult means weak punishment don’t give them a chance to be good nor warn them that the crime is wrong. Youth law should be changed to prevent teenager criminal repeating a crime and grow up as a normal citizen. It is already controversial whether to lower the age of the youth law or just eliminate it at all (*The Korea Herald,* 2022). A policy that was made to give juvenile a chance actually brought about juvenile being vicious so it should be revised and juvenile criminals must pay their crime equal to adult.

References

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